

success for students and her coworkers. We are blessed to have had such a caring teacher as Ms. Lewis. I commend her for her service as well as her good work and wish her continued success in future endeavors.

I ask my colleagues today to join with me in honoring Ms. Lewis, a wonderful teacher who has always and will be dedicated to the students of the Third District of Arkansas.

HEALTH CARE CHOICE FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. GRIJALVA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GRIJALVA. Private health insurance companies have two-thirds of all Americans that have insurance enrolled in their plans, and they pay one-third of the overall costs for health care in this country. Two-thirds of that cost is borne by the American taxpayer and the working middle class of this country.

You will hear in the next few days a lot of harping about the cost of health care reform for this Nation. I think the only way—and I believe sincerely—to reduce health care costs, bring private insurance companies under control by having a competitive plan, is to have a public option.

A public option does not deny people health care because of preexisting conditions—a public option in the free marketplace that competes with private insurance, and a public option that extends health benefits and opportunities to all Americans.

If we are going to do health reform right, we must provide competition for public insurance, and we must provide opportunity and choice for the American people.

THE WOMEN'S FUND OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. The Women's Fund of Miami-Dade County is a catalyst for social change and economic justice, assisting women to reach their full potential. Together with the Research Institute on Social and Economic Policy at Florida International University, the Women's Fund published a report entitled: Portrait of Women's Economic Security in Greater Miami, which reflects the dire economic situation facing women.

More than half of working women do not earn adequate income to cover their most basic necessities. Eighty-six percent of single mothers do not have enough income to be self-sufficient. Nearly 20 percent of women who work are underemployed. And only one-fourth of women have a retirement or pension plan.

The numbers in these categories are even lower than the national average

but reflect the problem of women across the country.

Here in Congress I work to empower women to be self-sufficient and support policies that enhance women's economic security, including legislation to provide paid parental leave to Federal employees.

I will continue to work for south Florida women by promoting initiatives that protect the rights of women across the Nation.

HEALTH CARE CRISIS ALSO AN ECONOMIC CRISIS

(Mr. DRIEHAUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Mr. Speaker, until we fix health care in this country, families and small businesses will bear a heavier and heavier financial burden that will slow economic recovery and stifle growth and investment.

In Ohio, health care costs for small businesses have grown 30 percent in recent years. Employer coverage across the State has declined, so that now less than half of all small businesses offer health care coverage benefits to their employees.

The average Ohio family that does receive health care coverage from their employer pays nearly \$13,000 in premiums every year. And because more than 1 in 10 Ohioans lives without any health insurance, Ohio's economy loses between \$3.5 billion and \$7 billion every year due to lost productivity.

The health care crisis is an economic crisis, and part of fixing our economy is ensuring that every single American has quality, affordable health care. The status quo is no longer tolerable for Ohio and no longer tolerable for America.

AMERICANS DESERVE A BETTER SOLUTION

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, the trillion-dollar stimulus bill produced by the Obama administration and congressional Democrats is not working. Unemployment is nearing double digits—and rising. Americans are hurting as they struggle to find work and pay the bills. So, what's next?

Despite all the broken promises, now the liberals want to meddle with the health care system and spend another trillion dollars. For their plan to work, Democrats are proposing tax hikes on everything from small businesses to the elimination of the tax deduction for charitable contributions to tax hikes on your favorite soft drink at the convenience store.

Americans deserve a better solution. House Republicans have a plan that won't bankrupt us or increase private insurance rates. In fact, the Republican plan will reduce health care costs, expand access, increase the quality of

care for Americans. Most importantly, the plan ensures that medical decisions are made by patients and their doctors—not government bureaucrats.

The Democrat's government-run health care program is the wrong decision for America. Let's support the plan that offers Americans the freedom and choices they deserve without strangling future generations with insurmountable debt.

MEANINGFUL REFORM NEEDED

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Health Subcommittee I have been a strong supporter of meaningful health care reform, including a robust public health insurance option.

But there's a problem with the plan that's on the table because it incorporates a Medicare reimbursement system that isn't fair. And all you have to do is look at States like Iowa and Minnesota, which consistently rank in the top five in terms of quality patient outcomes and in the bottom five in Medicare reimbursement. Or look at the State of Louisiana, where we spend more per Medicare patient than any other State, and Louisiana is ranked 50th in objective patient outcome measurements.

That system is flawed. When you base the public health insurance option on Medicare plus 5 percent, you perpetuate an inefficient system.

Medical economists will tell you the most effective way to take this head on is to address the problem of over-utilization in geographic parts of the country which waste money and result in poor patient outcomes.

Unless we incorporate those incentives into this public option and address this problem with Medicare, we will never have meaningful reform.

STIMULUS BILL NOT WORKING

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Will Rogers once said: The opposite of progress is Congress. Watching the debate on the floor today, I start to get a better idea about what he meant.

At a time when our country is facing the worst recession in a quarter of a century, the Democrat majority here in Congress just got done passing a national energy tax that will raise the cost of utilities for every American household. And now they're down here on the floor talking about raising taxes for a government takeover of health insurance. All the while, millions of Americans are out of work, hundreds of thousands of Americans continue to lose their jobs every month.

Now, when this trillion-dollar stimulus bill was passed in February, we